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Allan E. Day, Major, USAF

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NAVAL WAR COLLEGE  
Newport, R.I.

IMPLICATIONS OF SURROGATE WARFARE

by

Allan E. Day  
Major, USAF

A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Naval War College in partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Joint Military Operations.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

Major Allan E. Day, USAF

4 February 2002

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Colonel Pat Sweeney, US Army  
Professor, JMO Department

## Abstract

### IMPLICATIONS OF SURROGATE WARFARE

Surrogate warfare is a unique form of warfare not covered by current US joint doctrine. The use of surrogate forces provides the US with a quick strike capability. Surrogate warfare keeps the US footprint low and uses indigenous forces that are uniquely qualified to fight in their own environments. Achieving unity of effort, interoperability, and a successful war termination will be the primary challenges facing the Joint Force Commander to employ a surrogate force successfully. With proper planning these forces can be decisive for future conflicts.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

On 11 September 2001, Al Qaeda terrorists, directed by their leader Osama bin Laden, hijacked four airliners in-flight and flew two of them into the World Trade Center, one into the Pentagon, and one into a field in Pennsylvania.<sup>1</sup> These vicious acts, carried out on American soil, demanded a swift response. The US could not afford to wait for six months to build enough combat power to go on the offensive like we did for DESERT STORM. The terrorists had the capability to strike again and the US had the world mandate to strike back. The question was how to strike and with whom?

In similar fashion to ALLIED FORCE, the US chose to use US air forces as its quick response component for ENDURING FREEDOM, the fight against terrorism. In contrast to ALLIED FORCE, the US recognized and employed a surrogate ground force in the form of the Afghani opposition forces (AOF)<sup>2</sup> right from the start. This force was employed as the sole joint ground force component for ENDURING FREEDOM during the initial phases of the operation. Although both of these conflicts showed evidence that surrogate forces could be effectively employed in conjunction with airpower,<sup>3</sup> the fact that the Taliban government in Afghanistan was toppled in less than two months after the start of air strikes was an astounding testimony to their possibilities.

As the US prepares to fight in an ever more complex, multipolar world environment, without a large forward presence, surrogate warfare could provide the capability to respond quickly in difficult areas with a decisive force. A surrogate force can reduce the US's footprint in areas not amenable to a large contingent of US combat troops, while maintaining the legitimacy of the operation by using indigenous fighters.

The problem is that this highly effective, unique form of warfare is not covered by joint doctrine. In order to employ it effectively, Joint Force Commanders (JFCs) and their staffs

must first understand what it is. In addition, they must understand surrogate warfare's advantages to know when it can be employed effectively. Furthermore, they must be aware of the inherent planning challenges associated with surrogate warfare.

This study will first describe what makes surrogate warfare unique and establish a working definition of a surrogate force. It will then discuss five major reasons for using a surrogate force: quick response capability, small US footprint, uniquely qualified, legitimacy, and convenient contract.

Finally, once a surrogate force is chosen, joint force planners face many challenges to bringing about an effective operational plan. This study will focus on three of the most critical challenges for JFCs and their planning staffs: unity of effort, interoperability, and war termination. Operations ALLIED FORCE and ENDURING FREEDOM will be used as the primary cases to illustrate the advantages and challenges associated with the use of surrogate forces in modern war.<sup>4</sup>

## **II. WHAT IS SURROGATE WARFARE?**

To understand what surrogate warfare is, one must first understand what a surrogate force is. A surrogate force can be, and normally is, defined as a substitute force.<sup>5</sup> This definition, however, is too broad and lacks adequate clarity for a joint force planner, since any arrangement of forces between two or more nations would fall under this definition. Currently, joint doctrine covers the planning considerations for multinational operations, but only in the context of an alliance or a coalition.<sup>6</sup>

Joint Publication 3-0 defines an alliance as "the result of formal agreements between two or more nations for broad, long-term objectives."<sup>7</sup> NATO is a good example of an alliance,<sup>8</sup> with over 50 years of history, well-established norms, and standard operating procedures. In contrast, a coalition according to Joint Publication 3-0 is "an ad hoc

arrangement between two or more nations for common action; for instance, the coalition that defeated Iraqi aggression against Kuwait in the Gulf War 1990-1991.”<sup>9</sup>

The nature of surrogate warfare is different from that of either an alliance or coalition warfare. The arrangement with a surrogate like the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA)<sup>10</sup> in ALLIED FORCE was distinctly different in nature from the alliance relationship shared with the nineteen North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) nations.<sup>11</sup> In addition, the relationship the US had with the 23 nation coalition during DESERT STORM<sup>12</sup> was also distinctly different than the relationship the US had with the KLA in ALLIED FORCE and the arrangement the US recently established with the AOF for ENDURING FREEDOM. The fundamental differences are that the alliance and coalition forces were from individual nation-states and the interaction was primarily between the heads of these sovereign states as nearly equal partners with equal say.<sup>13</sup> Another difference was that the US did not rely on any one alliance or coalition force to be its sole joint force component in any realm: ground, air, or naval.

A search of joint doctrine for “surrogate warfare” returns no definitions or planning factors. The term surrogate is used in the definition of unconventional warfare as a method the special operations forces (SOF) can use to achieve that mission,<sup>14</sup> but not as a distinct form of warfare in itself. Unconventional warfare, according to Joint Pub 3-05, “includes guerrilla warfare, and other direct offensive, low visibility, covert, or clandestine operations.”<sup>15</sup> The nature of the fighting on the ground and the interaction of the AOF with the SOF liaisons, at the tactical level, may take on characteristics of unconventional guerrilla warfare, but at the operational level the AOF is being used in a much larger role as the JFC’s joint ground force component.

For the purposes of this paper, a surrogate force is an indigenous, non-national force, and surrogate warfare is a major operation involving an ad hoc relationship between a nation-state and a surrogate force when that force takes the place of a joint force component. Because this is an ad hoc relationship it has many similarities to a coalition. As described above, it also has some similarities to unconventional warfare, but it is clearly distinct and should be treated as such, because it has unique characteristics and implications for the JFC.

### **III. WHY USE A SURROGATE FORCE?**

The US faces an increasingly complex, multipolar world whose conflicts tend to be smaller and more frequent than during the Cold War. In this context, surrogate warfare may be the best option to achieve US strategic objectives. By using an indigenous force in combination with SOF liaisons, the US can strike quickly by alleviating the need to deploy a large conventional force into a hostile region. The surrogate is uniquely qualified to fight in its own terrain and inherently understands the cultural and language nuances that could hamper US conventional troops. The surrogate force can also provide ethnic legitimacy to the fight that US or allied forces alone may not have. Finally, the US and the surrogates operate under a mutually beneficial, convenient contract.

#### **Quick Response Capability**

The US was able to plan and conduct a quick, decisive major operation in ENDURING FREEDOM because it chose to use surrogate forces. The Al Qaeda terrorists struck the US on 11 September 2001, President Bush defined the strategic goals for ENDURING FREEDOM during a speech to the US Congress on 20 September 2001,<sup>16</sup> and the US carried out its first air strikes using missiles and carrier based air launched from the Arabian Sea on 7 October 2001—less than a month after the terrorist attacks.

It was soon evident that this conflict was not going to be an airpower-only war, when news reports hinted at the use of SOF liaisons on the ground along with AOF within the first two weeks of October 2001. The Taliban government gave up their hold on the capital of Kabul by 15 November 2001, and a new interim government was sworn in on 4 December 2001.<sup>17</sup> The ability of the US to carry out a coordinated, major operation involving land, naval, and air assets in a land-locked, mountainous country like Afghanistan in such a short time is unprecedented.

### **Small US Footprint**

The US ground footprint in Afghanistan during the decisive first two months of ENDURING FREEDOM was very small. While no actual numbers of troops are available at this time, the number of US troops that began the operation and carried it through its first two months was probably less than two thousand.<sup>18</sup> Prior to the thousand-man US Marine deployment to Camp Rhino, near Kandahar, Afghanistan on 26 November 2001,<sup>19</sup> the only US forces deployed in the region were SOF personnel that were primarily working with the AOF to call in air strikes and provide the critical communication and coordination links with the JFC.

According to Joint Pub 3-05 these SOF personnel operate in small teams and are uniquely qualified for the surrogate warfare mission. They travel lightly and can be inserted quickly, which reduces the strain on strategic mobility assets. They are mature, language qualified, and have years of expertise in their respective regions.<sup>20</sup> As one of these Army SOF officers stated, “Few realize that tens or hundreds of such [SOF] operators can shape a battlefield, war, or country. [Whereas] the introduction of thousands of conventional troops could cause more problems than they might solve.”<sup>21</sup> In just two short months, these force multipliers helped capture ten cities and toppled the Taliban. But as Joint Pub 3-05 states, they are not a replacement for conventional forces.<sup>22</sup> The US still required a viable ground force to

prosecute the war. Pakistan and the former Soviet Union satellites resisted having ground combat units launch strike missions from their countries, which limited options for using US ground forces,<sup>23</sup> and made using the AOF a better option.

### **Uniquely Qualified**

The AOF was a war hardened, indigenous force made up of nearly 15,000 troops<sup>24</sup> with an inherent knowledge of the language and culture. These troops were of the same caliber as the enemy; in fact, many of the men in the AOF had fought with the Taliban forces (then known as the Mujaheddin) against the Soviet Union. The Mujaheddin overcame the technologically superior Soviet Union who had four motorized divisions and over 140,000 troops in Afghanistan during the ten-year battle.<sup>25</sup> As General Franks, commander-in-chief, US Central Command and commander of the Afghanistan portion of ENDURING FREEDOM stated, “It has seemed to me, and still does, that the very best approach in a country is—if one finds willing allies who know the ground, know the people—that it is best to work with these groups.”<sup>26</sup> The US chose to use the AOF in conjunction with SOF liaisons and the combination was very effective.

### **Legitimacy**

The AOF also helped provide the legitimacy for US involvement. During ALLIED FORCE and DESERT STORM, one of the key tasks for the JFC was maintaining the integrity of the NATO and coalitions arrayed against the enemy.<sup>27</sup> Specifically, during DESERT STORM, the support of Muslim nations, such as Saudi Arabia, was critical for the legitimacy of the operation. In Afghanistan, the US is employing the Muslim AOF to fight against Muslim Taliban and Al Qaeda. As demonstrated by the failure of the Soviets, foreign, non-Muslim nations are not welcome in Afghanistan. Had the US tried to fight unilaterally, they would have most likely united the entire Muslim population against themselves.

As it turned out, there was evidence that using the AOF on the ground made it culturally acceptable for the Taliban to surrender or switch sides. Although this tendency to switch sides was a challenge to working with the Afghani forces, it did provide a decisive advantage when 40 Taliban commanders and their 1,200 Taliban soldiers chose to switch sides and give up control of the main north-south supply line for Afghanistan. This effectively cut off their former Taliban comrades in the South less than a week into the war.<sup>28</sup>

With all the above advantages, one might wonder why the US waited to use the KLA as its surrogate ground force for ALLIED FORCE until late in the war. Similar to the AOF, the KLA was available, culturally adept, and experienced in fighting in the mountainous terrain of Kosovo. They had 12,000 lightly armed troops operating in Kosovo and another 8,000 in training along the Kosovo-Albania border.<sup>29</sup> The KLA had been actively fighting against the Serbian regime since 1997, and had gained control of much of the countryside at times during the struggle. According to Colonel Vavra from the US Special Operations Command, the ALLIED FORCE leadership viewed the KLA as “a ragtag outfit that was of no value to the US.” He also confirms that this attitude was still prevalent amongst “armchair generals” when considering the use of the AOF in Afghanistan.<sup>30</sup> There is truth to the charge that these forces are not professional armies, nor would many of them be considered Jeffersonian models for citizenship,<sup>31</sup> but, as the AOF have shown, they can provide a decisive advantage if properly planned for and employed.

### **Convenient Contract**

One final advantage to using a surrogate force is that the arrangement can be short-lived or maintained longer-term. Both parties are free to end the arrangement when they choose. Obviously, this is a double-edged sword. As Michael Gordon explains in his New York Times article, “... the Bush administration’s relationship with the Northern Alliance [the largest

contributor to the AOF] is more of a temporary marriage of convenience than a deep strategic partnership. And it presents problems as well as opportunities.<sup>32</sup> It was clearly advantageous for the US to use the AOF as its ground component early in the war for the reasons outlined above: they provided a legitimate, ground force component that could prosecute a ground war quicker than deploying a large US conventional force.

For the AOF, the relationship was equally beneficial. The AOF had been fighting against the Taliban government since it took power in 1997.<sup>33</sup> According to Baker's Washington Post article, the AOF was only in control of ten percent of the country and was outnumbered three to one prior to US involvement.<sup>34</sup> They needed the US to provide the decisive air power and the SOF liaisons to give them the vital coordination and communication links which made them an effective fighting force. They also required a lot of logistical support, which the US provided through the SOF liaisons.<sup>35</sup>

As long as this delicate "marriage of convenience" remains advantageous to both sides, the arrangement can continue, but once the operational objectives are achieved, the surrogate force is at a disadvantage. This was demonstrated when the UN called for the disbandment of the KLA as part of the terms of peace because they were seen as a destabilizing force in the region. The United Nations recognized that an armed KLA was a destabilizing influence for Balkan peace and passed Resolution 1244 which called for the KLA to disarm.<sup>36</sup>

In the case of Afghanistan, the Northern Alliance is the largest fighting force in the AOF, but is not representative of the entire populace<sup>37</sup> and could not be allowed to gain sole power for the nation despite their desire to occupy the capital city of Kabul. The United Nations quickly installed an interim government that represented a cross section of Afghanistan's ethnicity. The final status of the Northern Alliance is yet to be determined, but it is the US, in coordination with the UN, that has the option of continuing the Northern

Alliance's legitimacy as a viable force or calling for their disbandment. This can be seen as an advantage of a surrogate over a coalition or an alliance, as the US or the UN does not have the option to disband another sovereign nation's forces.

Joint force planners need to consider what relationship the US should maintain with the surrogate, if any, and provide clear recommendations within the context of the stated objectives as to when the relationship should end. They must also assess, with the help of SOF liaisons, the surrogate's possible courses of action in the latter phases of the operation and prepare for unilateral dissolution of the contract on their part.

## **IMPLICATIONS TO OPERATIONAL PLANNING**

Though there are clearly positive aspects to using surrogate forces, there are many challenges to joint force planners that make working with surrogates a very complex and risky undertaking. The fact that a surrogate force is a non-national force that takes the place of an entire US joint force component adds a level of complexity to planning. Integrating a surrogate force into a cohesive operational plan can be more difficult than incorporating a coalition or alliance into an operation. At least in the case of coalitions and alliances there is an opportunity to engage with the nation through multinational exercises and bilateral military and diplomatic exchanges to establish a common understanding of command and control, interoperability, and cultural issues. This is not possible with surrogates.<sup>38</sup> Using a surrogate is more than likely going to entail planning to a very low baseline<sup>39</sup> in terms of how to achieve unity of effort, interoperability, and a successful war termination. Without these three basic ingredients intact, the operational plan will likely fail to meet its objectives.<sup>40</sup>

### **Unity of Effort**

Terry Pudas, in his Joint Forces Quarterly article, “Preparing Future Coalition Commanders” accurately places establishing command relationships at the top of planning

considerations, “The most important element in preparing for combined operations is developing sound and effective coalition command relationships.” Additionally he states, “When unity of command is not achievable, then unity of effort and an agreed upon strategy must be achieved through the efforts of allied commanders.”<sup>41</sup> In the case of surrogates, achieving unity of effort is a major challenge because in most cases there will not be a single commander or a clear chain of command for the JFC to work with. Neither the KLA nor the AOF had a single command infrastructure that everyone understood and followed.<sup>42</sup> Judah’s description of the command infrastructure of the KLA highlights the difficulty of working with these irregular forces:

While there was a rudimentary General Staff Headquarters, there was not one supreme commander giving orders. Of those that were issued, some were obeyed, some were ignored; and some groups calling themselves KLA—because that was what everyone else was doing—were really village groups knitted together by clan connections and fear. Everyone knew the local commander, but few knew the leader at the next level up and were unwilling to listen to orders from those they didn’t know.<sup>43</sup>

The Northern Alliance, as described by Paddy Ashdown and others, brings similar command and control issues to the planning table,

...the Northern Alliance is an alliance only against the Taliban. An uneasy coalition of Tajiks, Hazara, and Uzbeks, the soldiers’ normal occupation is not fighting together, but fighting each other.<sup>44</sup>

The fact that Northern Alliance is at odds with its fellow opposition forces from the Pashtun tribes, who also happen to be the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan, makes unity of command impossible and unity of effort very difficult.<sup>45</sup>

As a planner, establishing a unity of effort will require a good understanding of the social and cultural landscape, to include surrogate “values, religious systems, and economic outlooks.”<sup>46</sup> Furthermore, planners must know the objective of major factions to bring them into line with US objectives. Finally, planners must work with the SOF liaisons to get an

assessment of what the surrogate force can bring to the fight, to effectively integrate them into a cohesive operational plan.

Surrogate forces will most likely not work under the direct command of another nation. In the case of Afghanistan, the SOF liaisons were careful to keep an even lower profile than normal because “none of the major Afghan commanders … [were] willing to acknowledge publicly that their Muslim troops [were] working directly with the American military.”<sup>47</sup> A good way to achieve effective combat power using a surrogate is to bring them into the planning process, either directly, if representative leaders can be found, or as a backup, through liaisons with the SOF. In Afghanistan, the SOF liaisons provided this vital coordination link between the JFC and the surrogate leaders.<sup>48</sup>

The ultimate goal is to get a consensus on the objectives for each phase of the operation and to establish basic operating procedures and rules of engagement. If a consensus is not possible, the JFC will have to make the determination whether the increased risk of mission failure is worth it. If the risk of mission failure with a surrogate force is too great, then more unilateral options will have to be pursued.

### **Interoperability**

Interoperability is another key issue that joint force planners must consider early in the process. Pudas states that “military success in coalition warfare depends on the ability of American commanders to harmonize the capabilities, doctrines, and logistics of forces from varied cultures.”<sup>49</sup> This same maxim applies to surrogate warfare, but it may be even harder to accomplish because surrogates will not, more than likely, have any warfighting doctrine to start with and their logistics infrastructure may be nearly nonexistent as was the case for both the KLA and the AOF. During ENDURING FREEDOM and even the Gulf War, SOF liaisons made these obstacles surmountable.

These specialized teams have personnel that are regionally focused and language trained to provide the critical link between the disparate forces and the JFC. According to Joint Pub 3-05, SOF liaisons can provide training to coalition partners on tactics and techniques, assist with a communications interface to integrate them into the command and intelligence structure, and establish a liaison to coordinate for combat support and combat service support.<sup>50</sup> SOF liaisons can also coordinate operational timing to bring effective combat power to bear on the enemy. In Afghanistan, they were living, walking, and riding on horseback with their Afghan counterparts; their saddlebags, however, contain “GPS trackers, laser designators, satellite-communications gear that enables them to talk directly with pilots overhead and laptop computers on which they download satellite imagery to show the local commanders where the Taliban forces are.”<sup>51</sup>

These SOF liaisons are one of the real keys to successful employment of surrogate forces. They provided a secure channel and filter mechanism for sharing intelligence with the AOF. They have also been the conduits for supply support to the local bands of fighters by coordinating airdrops of critical support items, such as cold weather gear and ammunition, and according to Secretary of Defense Rumsfield, they have even called in for “saddles, bridles, and horse feed.”<sup>52</sup>

Planners must plan to use these liaisons for future applications of surrogate forces, but must also understand their constraints. They are a limited resource and due to their numerous years of specialty training and the unique capabilities each one brings to the fight; they are very valuable and hard to replace.<sup>53</sup> They serve as liaisons with the forces, not commanders of the forces. Their credibility and effectiveness is directly dependent on the trust they build in the indigenous leaders they serve with. These relationships can take some time to build so the use of SOF should be considered early in the process.

## War Termination

Clausewitz suggests that we must begin all wars with the end in mind.<sup>54</sup> Achieving a successful war termination presupposes that you have achieved your operational and strategic objectives. Working through a common set of objectives toward a common desired end state is a challenge for any multinational operation, but there is an added level of complexity with surrogate warfare. The fact that surrogate forces are non-national entities, quite possibly without an effective chain of command, gives the US very little leverage to hold the surrogate force on task. The historical rule of coalitions also holds for surrogates: “The closer a coalition is to victory, the more individual partners diverge from common objectives to pursue their own aims.”<sup>55</sup>

In the case of Afghanistan, there were no formal agreements or command relationships that could be held over the AOF leaders. The power to influence their behavior came mainly through their liaisons with the SOF. These SOF liaisons had to resort to bribes of “money, weapons, and cold-weather gear”<sup>56</sup> to keep the Afghan leaders working towards US objectives because of a difference of desired end states. Planners must be aware that it is possible to conduct a stellar series of successful battles and not achieve the end state they desire simply because they did not plan adequate branches and sequels for the actions of the surrogate forces.

In Kosovo, the KLA’s desired end state was much different than that of NATO as described by Ignatieff:

They [the KLA] demanded full independence for Kosovo as a step towards a Greater Albania. Neither the Europeans nor the Americans had any appetite for altering existing frontiers and the prospect of an independent Kosovo terrified neighboring countries—Macedonia, Greece and Montenegro—with substantial ethnic Albanian minorities.<sup>57</sup>

NATO forces began the war with Serbia to stop Milosevic from driving out or killing every Albanian and to restore stability to the region. Creating an independent Kosovo or a Greater Albanian nation was not a part of that end state.

In his “Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People” on 20 September 2001, President Bush clearly stated that his desired end state was a world free of terrorism and that the campaign would begin in Afghanistan. He defined the enemy as Osama bin Laden and his Al Qaeda terrorist network. Furthermore, he stated that any ruling regime (i.e., the Taliban) that harbored these or other terrorists were the enemy as well.<sup>58</sup> Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld was even more explicit about the military’s mission in Afghanistan: “to capture or kill all the Al Qaeda and prevent them from escaping—[and] to capture or kill the senior Taliban leadership.”<sup>59</sup>

The Northern Alliance was not on the same sheet of music. They wanted the Taliban out of power to regain territory, but just pushing Osama bin Laden and the Al Qaeda out of their country was good enough for most. As Gordon states:

The war aims of the United States and the anti-Taliban opposition do not always neatly coincide....Afghan forces were concerned principally with recovering territory while the United States was intent on the capture or killing of Osama Bin Laden, who has eluded his pursuers.<sup>60</sup>

Cultural anomalies made the problems worse. In Afghanistan, it is completely acceptable to switch allegiances to the opposite side of the battle—not just once but several times as noted by Peter Baker, of The Washington Post who writes, “General Abdurrashid Dostum [one of the leading Northern Alliance generals], an ethnic Uzbek warlord has fought on both sides of almost every Afghan conflict of the last decade and is now on the side of the Northern Alliance.”<sup>61</sup> The US also found that the AOF were willing to cut deals with the Taliban officials and fighters to grant them their freedom.<sup>62</sup> There was very little the US could do about it without direct control over the AOF leadership. So just as history has proven that

working with coalitions and alliances is difficult because of divergent war aims, working with surrogates can be just as difficult due to the lack of command and control a JFC has over the surrogate forces.

### **Getting Control Over War Termination**

According to the current US National Military Strategy, waging modern war will involve using external forces either in the form of alliances or coalitions<sup>63</sup> (or now surrogates). Therefore, the issues of divergent ends and differences in culture will not go away anytime soon. There is clearly a balance to the benefit of aligning with outside forces to fight a war. The question is how to reduce the risks that these arrangements impose. One way is to look at more unilateral options.

During ALLIED FORCE, for example, General Clark, Supreme Allied Commander for Europe, had two separate targeting cells; one for NATO air strikes and one for US only strikes. For each of the NATO strikes, he had to get each target approved by 19 nations, but for US only strikes “he would pass them [targets] on to the Joint Chiefs, who would send particularly sensitive targets to the White House for clearance—approval usually came within 30 minutes.”<sup>64</sup> According to Ignatieff, Clark did this for two reasons: First, “Clark kept the coalition from paralyzing the air war by keeping NATO out of missions using American planes.” This allowed him to strike targets that NATO could not reach a consensus on. Second, Clark “[feared]—correctly as it turned out—that other NATO countries might leak target information to the Serbs.”<sup>65</sup> Ultimately, the capability to strike a target with only US forces, allowed him to take out the highly controversial, dual use targets that had a major effect on bringing the war to an end.<sup>66</sup> Obviously, the unilateral approach has implications to maintaining unity within an alliance, but this must be weighed on a case-by-case basis against the value of the objective.

In ENDURING FREEDOM, the US has achieved most of its operational goals, but its strategic objective of bringing in Osama bin Laden “dead or alive” remains unrealized, partly due to the divergent end states between the AOF and the US. Some of the Afghan commanders pulled their troops off task when they felt they had achieved their own objectives and gave only token priority to the US’s main goal of capturing Osama Bin Laden. As a result, the US was left operating in a dangerous environment without adequate forces on the ground to accomplish the mission.<sup>67</sup>

At this point the US needed to have forces available to allow them to transition to a US led ground operation in key areas. As a war moves into its final phases, and portions of the surrogate forces start seeking their own ends, the US should plan to be in control of the decisive portion of the conflict either directly through the use of US forces or indirectly by having positive control of the forces in that region.

Some may suggest that we should disregard the surrogate forces and just do it ourselves from the start. There are advantages to this approach in command and control, interoperability, and a common end state, but a US only approach is full of risk as well. The Soviets are an excellent example of why a surrogate army was needed in Afghanistan. The Soviets were seen as invaders, and despite having vastly superior firepower, were soundly beaten because they had aroused the entire nation against them.<sup>68</sup> The US in Afghanistan now, had little choice but to use the AOF to provide the legitimacy for US involvement and to make it clear that the US did not have territorial ambitions.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

The US employed a surrogate force as its joint force land component in both of its two most recent major operations: ALLIED FORCE and ENDURING FREEDOM. These surrogate armies were indigenous, non-national forces that worked in conjunction with SOF

and airpower to bring about victory. This new brand of warfare comes with unique advantages and challenges that JFCs and their staffs must consider prior to using them.

Surrogates need to be considered in future war because they can provide the US with a quick strike capability using only a small contingent of US ground forces, reducing the need for strategic lift assets. These surrogate forces are uniquely qualified to fight in their own terrain against a common enemy. They provide legitimacy while operating outside of a formal agreement, which can be a benefit for war termination. All the same, the use of surrogates does involve challenges to joint force planners. Military effectiveness will directly correlate to the planning staff's ability to understand the social and cultural landscape and the capabilities the particular surrogate brings to the fight. Furthermore, they will need to plan for the surrogate to be more loyal to his culture and ethnicity than to his arrangement with the US. To the extent possible, the surrogate leadership needs to be brought into the planning process to gain agreement on the objectives of each phase of the war. When those objectives diverge, planners need to prepare US forces for unilateral action to ensure mission accomplishment.

The role of the SOF liaisons will be critical to the success of any of these types of ventures in the future. These personnel are very mature, highly specialized, and very capable. They were the key to success in ENDURING FREEDOM and, as this operation showed, they were the only interface the JFC had with the surrogate forces. They provided the critical communications, intelligence, and logistical support interface that made the AOF effective. But with all the success comes their limitations, they are liaisons only and not in command of the surrogate forces. They can cajole, bribe, or otherwise try to influence the surrogate's actions, but ultimately the surrogate may not listen. Finally, JFCs and planners must prepare and plan from the start for the war termination phase of the conflict or risk winning a series of battles but losing the war.

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<sup>1</sup> This final aircraft was possibly headed for Washington DC, but there is evidence that the passengers heroically took the plane back from the hijackers and forced it down in Pennsylvania.

<sup>2</sup> The Afgani Opposition Forces (AOF) is a generic name for the conglomeration of Afghani forces being employed as surrogate forces in Afghanistan. Most news reports refer to the Northern Alliance as the only Afghani force fighting against the Taliban when this is not the case. There are three main Afghani forces, the Northern Alliance, by far the largest contributor, the Eastern Shura Alliance, and the Southern Pashtun Alliance. The use of the word “Alliance” is misleading since they are not an organized alliance based on established treaties. According to Alan Sipress and Colum Lynch, “Leaders Shifting Focus To Interim Government; Taliban Retreat From Kabul Accelerates Diplomacy,” The Washington Post, 13 November 2001, A15, the Northern Alliance is a loose coalition of rebels comprised primarily of ethnic Uzbeks, Tajiks, and Hazaras, and has long been at odds with the Pashtuns, the largest ethnic group in Afghanistan.” The Northern Alliance helped capture the northern cities of Mazar-I Sharif, Kunduz, and marched on the capital of Kabul. The Eastern Alliance, ethnically centered in Jalalabad, was involved in the assault on the Tora Bora cave network after the Taliban fell. According to Michael Gordon, “One War, Differing Aims,” New York Times, 18 December 2001, the Eastern Alliance is “basically a group of village leaders.” Finally, the Southern Alliance was made up of Pashtuns that helped take the key Taliban city of Kandahar, and also marched on Kabul from the south. For the purposes of this paper, I will refer to the entire Afghani surrogate force as the AOF and only refer to the Northern Alliance when necessary to make a point about them specifically. An excellent source for the origins of the ethnic and cultural issues in Afghanistan can be found in Ahmed Rashid’s, Taliban, (New Haven: Yale 2001) 1-30.

<sup>3</sup> There are several authors that describe the success the KLA had late in the war while working in conjunction with NATO Special Forces and airpower. The KLA could not go it alone, they needed logistical support and needed to work in coordination with another joint force component such as an air force to achieve success. Ian Fisher, “Aided by NATO Bombing, Rebels Position Themselves to Become Kosovo’s New Army,” New York Times, 9 June 1999, A14. Fisher states that the KLA showed signs of success late in the war when NATO was allowed to coordinate its air strikes with them. The KLA forces were able to make some inroads in the Junik area of northwestern Kosovo after intense fighting during the week to ten days immediately prior to the Serb withdrawal.

Stephen T. Hosmer, The Conflict Over Kosovo: Why Milosevic Decided to Settle When He Did. Santa Monica, CA: Rand, 2001, 87-88. Hosmer details that the KLA forces carried out a major offensive (code-named Operation ARROW) in concert with NATO air power in the Mount Pashtrik area of southwestern Kosovo. Both of these operations occurred very late in the war and did not have a major impact on the outcome of the war, but they proved that a surrogate army could be used in conjunction with airpower to prosecute a modern war especially in remote, isolated, mountainous regions where the US has little or no practical experience.

<sup>4</sup> During ALLIED FORCE the US hesitated to use the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) until all hope of a US ground offensive was gone and civilian casualties were rising due to the high altitude bombing operation. In the end the KLA was used effectively in conjunction with a small number of NATO Special Forces. See Albrecht Schnabel and Ramesh Thakur, ed., Kosovo and the Challenge of Humanitarian Intervention: Selective Indignation, Collective Action, and International Citizenship, (New York: United Nations University, 2000), 441.

<sup>5</sup> See Department of the Army, Special Forces Operations, FM 3-05.20 (Washington DC: 26 June 2001) 2-5. FM 3-05.20 describes surrogates as any substitute force. In the context of coalitions it states on page 2-6, “From a U.S. point of view, these coalition forces and resources are surrogates and act as substitutes for U.S. troops and resources, reducing U.S. commitment.” This description sees a coalition as a form of surrogate force from the US perspective.

<sup>6</sup> See Joint Chiefs of Staff, Doctrine for Joint Operations, Joint Pub 3-0 (Washington DC: 10 September 2001), VI-1. Chapter VI entitled, “Multinational Operations” considers only two distinct types of multinational operations for peace and war stating on page VI-1, “Multinational operations...are conducted within the structure of an alliance or coalition.” The specific considerations for multinational operations are stated beginning on page VI-2: National Goals, Unity of Effort, Doctrine, Training, and Equipment, Cultural Differences, Management of

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Resources, and National Communications. For more discussion on multinational operations, see Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Doctrine for Multinational Operations, Joint Pub 3-16 (Washington DC: 5 April 2000).

<sup>7</sup> Joint Pub 3-0, VI-1.

<sup>8</sup> NATO is comprised of 19 nations that each had to ratify the North Atlantic Treaty provisions before becoming a member of the organization.

<sup>9</sup> Joint Pub 3-0, VI-1.

<sup>10</sup> The relationship the US had with the KLA was nonexistent at first, but after the war reached its final stages, the US supported them with air power while using NATO Special Forces as spotters. See also Chris Hedges's article, "Kosovo's Next Masters?" Foreign Affairs, (New York: May/June 1999). Hedges provides an excellent account of how the KLA came into being, who its leaders are, and what drives it. See note 3.

<sup>11</sup> Wesley Clark, Waging Modern War, (New York: PublicAffairs 2001). The second section of the book describes the relationship he had with the 19 NATO nations and what it was like for Clark to command a NATO operation. Unlike the NATO nations, Clark does not formally bring the KLA leadership into his planning team at any point in the operation nor were they incorporated into his command and control structure.

<sup>12</sup> Joint Pub 3-16, B-2. Appendix B is a representative chronological list of multinational operations that the US has taken part in since 1900. DESERT STORM is highlighted as a coalition and ALLIED FORCE is described as a multinational NATO operation. Surrogates are not mentioned.

<sup>13</sup> See notes 10 and 11.

<sup>14</sup> See the glossary of Joint Chief of Staff, Doctrine for Joint Special Operations, Joint Pub, 3-05 (Washington DC: 17 April 1998), GL-11. The salient portion of the definition is: "A broad spectrum of military and paramilitary operations, normally of long duration, predominantly conducted by indigenous or surrogate forces who are organized, trained, equipped, supported and directed in varying degrees by an external source."

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., GL-11.

<sup>16</sup> George W. Bush, "Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People," 20 September 2001, internet, <<http://www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2001/09/print/20010920-8.htm>> (11 January 2002).

<sup>17</sup> See chronological list of news reports on CNN's website dedicated to the "War Against Terror," <<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/trade.center/interactive.htm>>, online, (23 November 2001).

<sup>18</sup> In both ALLIED FORCE and ENDURING FREEDOM, the US committed very few ground troops. In ALLIED FORCE there was evidence of a small number of NATO Special Forces personnel, see Schnabel and Thakur, page 441. In ENDURING FREEDOM, there are no accurate numbers of personnel available, but the bulk of the action by US personnel was seen by Special Operations Forces (SOF) liaisons with the AOF. The total number of these forces was small due to the fact that Special Forces are divided into five regions and according to John Collins, "Special Operation Forces in Peacetime," Joint Forces Quarterly, Spring 1999, 61, there were a total of 8,781 (authorized) Special Forces personnel in 1999. This would mean that the maximum number of Special Forces in Afghanistan would probably number less than 1,500. John Keegan, "Beating the Terrorist at His Own Game," London Daily Telegraph, 3 December 2001, states, "no more than 800 [American Special Forces] are reported to have been deployed to Afghanistan." For a description of some of the action these Special Forces have seen, see Michael Gordon, "'New' U.S. War: Commandos, Airstrikes, and Allies on the Ground," New York Times, 29 December 2001.

<sup>19</sup> Thompson was quoted in Bradley Graham's article, "Unfinished Business In Proxy War: Relying on Afghan Allies Said to Cost U.S. Control," The Washington Post, 6 January 2002, 1. The US Marines inserted a 1,000 man detachment into "Camp Rhino" near Kandahar on 26 November 2001 to shore up Pashtun support and gain control of a portion of the fight.

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<sup>20</sup> Joint Pub 3-05, II-2.

<sup>21</sup> Bill Gertz and Rowan Scarborough, "Inside the Ring," Washington Times, 11 January 2002, 9.

<sup>22</sup> JP 3-05, II-2.

<sup>23</sup> Michael Gordon, in his article, "'New' U.S. War: Commandos, Airstrikes and Allies on the Ground," states, "The Pentagon had to contend with a shortage of military bases in the region. Pakistan did not welcome the arrival of large numbers of American troops. Uzbekistan and Tajikistan, to the north, were firmly within the Russian sphere of influence. There was also the problem of forbidding terrain, a population with a deep suspicion of foreign forces and an anti-Taliban resistance that was not a coherent insurgency, but an array of bickering and ethnically diverse factions."

<sup>24</sup> Peter Baker and Molly Moore, "Anti-Taliban Rebels Eager to Join U.S. Retaliation," The Washington Post, 24 September 2001, Academic Universe-Document, Lexis-Nexis, Dayton, OH: Lexis-Nexis (26 November 2001). This article estimates the AOF strength at 15,000 men and the Taliban strength at 45,000 men. These estimates are similar to those given on CNN's website dedicated to the "War Against Terror,"  
<<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/trade.center/interactive.htm>>.

<sup>25</sup> Michael Griffin, Reaping the Whirlwind: The Taliban Movement in Afghanistan, (London: Pluto Press, 2001), xi. Griffin does point out that the Mujaheddin received supplies and equipment from numerous sources such as Iran and the US during this struggle.

<sup>26</sup> General Franks was quoted in Bradley Graham's Washington Post article "Unfinished Business in Proxy War."

<sup>27</sup> Clark, 446. Most of Clark's book is dedicated to discussions of the difficulty of maintaining an alliance while trying to fight a war. He mentions that sovereignty causes some of the problems and that "the biggest challenge for NATO's member nations is to harmonize differing national interests and points of view." He goes on to say that "NATO decisions are made by consensus, which means that any nation can stop NATO's actions at any point that formal decisions are made," 447.

<sup>28</sup> Peter Baker and Susan Glasser, "Rebels Capture Northern Areas, Cut Off Taliban Supply Route," The Washington Post, 10 October 2001, Academic Universe-Document, Lexis-Nexis, Dayton, OH: Lexis-Nexis (26 November 2001), A01.

<sup>29</sup> Tim Judah, Kosovo: War and Revenge, (New Haven: Yale 2000), 282.

<sup>30</sup> Glenn Vavra, Colonel US Army, is currently Chief of the Joint Doctrine and Education Division at US Special Operations Command. Colonel Vavra is an expert in SOF operations and doctrine and has been involved in many of the SOF operations over the past twenty years. The comments were from an email response to a draft of this paper. <vavrag@socom.mil>, "Surrogate Warfare." [Email to Allan Day <dayabcdef@aol.com>] 2 February 2002.

<sup>31</sup> Using surrogates like the KLA and AOF may mean getting involved with unsavory characters. According to Anonymous, "Predictably, the Yugoslav War is Not Over," Defense and Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy, (Alexandria: May/June 1999), describes the KLA in a short paragraph, "The KLA...remains at its heart an organization which is a) undemocratic, b) focused on illegal narcotics trafficking and all of the violence which accompanies it, throughout Western Europe, for its financing and raison d'être, c) enmired in criminal extortion, prostitution rackets and other illegal activities, d) Stalinist by political orientation, e) involved intimately with major radical Islamist groups, and particularly the organization of Osama bin Laden, and f) committed to taking over the Republic of Albania and parts of the FYR [Federal Yugoslav Republic] of Macedonia as a 'greater Albania.' This much is not in dispute by professional intelligence organizations."

According to Robert Novak's article, "With Friends Like These in Afghanistan," The Chicago Sun-Times, 20 November 2001, B8, the Northern Alliance has long competed with the Taliban for the narcotics trade that supplies "heroin for the entire European continent, especially Britain." Heroin production "comprises 80 percent

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of the gross domestic product" of Afghanistan. Afghanistan also has the distinction of being the world's leading producer of opium, "accounting for 70 percent" of the world market. Novak also states, "Drugs are not the only sin of [the Northern Alliance]." Human Rights Watch...issued a serious indictment of the Northern Alliance noting reports of "summary executions, burning of houses and looting, principally targeting the ethnic Pashtuns and others suspected of supporting the Taliban." There are many parallels with the KLA.

<sup>32</sup> Michael Gordon, "A Nation Challenged: The Strategy; Alliance of Convenience: Rebels Useful to US," New York Times, 23 October 2001. Lexis-Nexis, Dayton, OH: Lexis-Nexis, (26 November 2001), B3.

<sup>33</sup> "Taliban" description available online at <<http://www.cnn.com/SPECIALS/2001/trade.center/interactive/key.players/intro.tal.html>> [1 February 2002].

<sup>34</sup> Baker and Moore, "Anti-Taliban Rebels Eager to Join U.S. Retaliation."

<sup>35</sup> John Barry, "A New Breed of Soldier," Newsweek, 10 December 2001, internet <<http://ebird.dtic.mil/Dec2001/e20011203breed.htm>> [3 December 2001].

<sup>36</sup> Judah, 306. Recent articles such as "NATO Faces Combat With KLA Forces Which the US Trained and Armed," Defense and Foreign Affairs Strategic Policy, (Alexandria, February 2001), have stated that the KLA did not disband as required, they simply changed their name to the National Liberation Army (NLA), laid low for a short time, then recently began fighting in Macedonia. They are still pursuing a "greater Albanian" nation. See note 31.

<sup>37</sup> See note 2.

<sup>38</sup> Both the KLA and the AOF were involved in what can be described as insurgencies. One of the unique missions of the Special Forces is to assist insurgencies when it is in the national interest of the US, see Joint Pub 3-05 pages II-6 and II-7 for a discussion of the unconventional warfare mission. The distinction being made here is that the US generally does not consider unconventional warfare support to insurgencies as a form of engagement. See Thomas Jordan, Douglas Lovelace, Jr., and Thomas-Durell Young's discussion in "'Shaping' the World Through 'Engagement': Assessing the Department of Defense's Theater Engagement Planning Process," (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute April 2000). This paper describes the engagement process and the types of engagement activities that the US uses to establish ties between other nations. Support to insurgencies is not covered as a form of engagement and probably should not be since supporting insurgencies is inherently destabilizing and against the tenets of engagement.

<sup>39</sup> One of the military lessons highlighted by Albrecht Schnabel and Ramesh Thakur, ed., Kosovo and the Challenge of Humanitarian Intervention: Selective Indignation, Collective Action, and International Citizenship, (New York: United Nations University, 2000), 498, was that the "fundamental policy differences between the allies led to a lowest common denominator approach to achieving military objectives." He made this reference to NATO allies who have had long-term relationships built over many years. Achieving objectives with a surrogate force will be that much more difficult due to the inherently "ad hoc" nature of the arrangement. See also the article by Terry J. Pudas, "Preparing Future Coalition Commanders," Joint Forces Quarterly, Winter 1993/94, 41, for more on this dynamic.

<sup>40</sup> Milan N. Vego, Operational Warfare, Naval War College, Joint Military Operations Department, Textbook, 2000. Vego provides a detailed discussion in his definitive text on the operational level of war, see pages 1-20, 59-73, 164-165, 409-428, 477, and 485.

<sup>41</sup> Pudas, 41.

<sup>42</sup> The Northern Alliance was not the only surrogate force employed in Afghanistan, see note 2. Unity of effort was even more difficult to achieve because there were three major alliances: the Northern, Eastern, and Southern. But these alliances did not have cohesive, coherent command structures.

<sup>43</sup> Judah, 147.

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<sup>44</sup> Paddy Ashdown. "Beware the Peace That Kills," The Observer, 18 November 2001, 31. Also see note 2.

<sup>45</sup> Alan Sipress and Colum Lynch, "Leaders Shifting Focus to Interim Government; Taliban Retreat from Kabul Accelerates Diplomacy," The Washington Post, 13 November 2001, A15.

<sup>46</sup> Joint Pub 3-0, VI-4.

<sup>47</sup> Michael Gordon, "One War, Differing Aims," 1.

<sup>48</sup> John Barry, "A New Breed of Soldier," Newsweek, 10 December 2001, internet <<http://ebird.dtic.mil/Dec2001/e20011203breed.htm>> [3 December 2001]. While it is unlikely that the US will get operational control over a surrogate force, they may be effectively employed with a parallel command structure.

<sup>49</sup> Pudas, 41. For more discussion see also Joint Pub 3-0, VI-1-VI-5.

<sup>50</sup> Joint Pub 3-05, II-11.

<sup>51</sup> Barry.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

<sup>53</sup> Collins, 61.

<sup>54</sup> Carl Von Clausewitz, On War, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton, NJ: Princeton, 1984, p. 584.

<sup>55</sup> Pudas, 44.

<sup>56</sup> Sally Buzbee, "Afghans Prove Fickle Allies in the Hunt," The Providence Journal, 5 January 2002, A1.

<sup>57</sup> Ignatieff, 58.

<sup>58</sup> George W. Bush, "Address to a Joint Session of Congress and the American People."

<sup>59</sup> William Arkin, "Dropping 15,000 pounds of Frustration," Los Angeles Times, 15 December 2001, 10.

<sup>60</sup> Michael Gordon, "One War, Different Aims," 1.

<sup>61</sup> Baker and Moore, "Anti-Taliban Rebels Eager to Join U.S. Retaliation."

<sup>62</sup> Graham, 1.

<sup>63</sup> Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, "National Military Strategy," (Washington DC: 1997) available on-line <<http://www.dtic.mil/jcs/core/executiv.htm>>, 3.

<sup>64</sup> Ignatieff, 103.

<sup>65</sup> Ignatieff, 102-103.

<sup>66</sup> Hosmer, 91-107, 135. Hosmer summarizes the effect of the bombing, "According to Milosevic's own testimony and the contemporary statement of senior FRY officials and close Milosevic associates, the key reason Milosevic agreed to accept the terms presented to him on June 2 was his fear of the bombing that would follow if he refused." 91. Later Hosmer quotes the FRY Third Army commander, General Pavkovic describing his fear that "the remaining bridges will be destroyed, the infrastructure demolished, towns bombed, and the entire power industry, and so on." 95. Hosmer also quotes the Joint Forces Air Component Commander, USAF General

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Michael Short as saying, “There are nations that will not attack targets that my nation [the US] will attack. There are nations that do not share with us a definition of what is a valid military target.” 135. Though the US had the option to go unilateral, it had to make very judicious use of this option or risk losing the support of the alliance.

<sup>67</sup> Graham, 1.

<sup>68</sup> Baker and Moore, “Anti-Taliban Rebels Eager to Join U.S. Retaliation,” 1.